

# The Historicity of Ramayana and its spread in the West

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**Introduction:** The spread of Ramayana in the SEA countries, China, Japan has been well studied and documented<sup>1</sup>, however, its spread to or the impact on the west has not been studied completely<sup>2</sup>. From the secondary source material of the last 200 years, it is evident the the opinion of the western scholars has shifted or changed from "Homer copying from Valmiki" to "Valmiki copying from Homer"! Then, they introduced the hypothesis of "Alexander conquering" India! Finding that it could not get support from their own colleagues and of course Indians, they changed the hypothesis<sup>3</sup> of "conquer" to "invasion" or "attempted invasion", even though "Alexander did not know India", as the "geographers"<sup>4</sup> were thinking to reach "India" either by "land" or "sea"! After the discovery of "Gilgamesh", yet another hypothesis was introduced that Valmiki got the story from it. Many times, the western scholars used to accuse that Indians are not responding and thus, they have accepted their "views". Therefore, for Indians, it is imperative to respond to and refute such "hypotheses" and later forcing on Indians themselves. First, the Valmiki-Homer problem is discussed.

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<sup>1</sup> The influence of Ramayana in the SEA countries has been so deep that it has exhibited in the factors of culture, tradition, heritage and civilization starting from the first centuries of current era (CE).

V. Raghavan (Ed.), *Ramayana Tradition in Asia*, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> "The spread of Ramayana in the West" – such thinking or whisper is considered as anathema in the present context because of different prevailing ideological and political controversies. However, there have been passing references by way of comparison noted by "striking similarities":

Donald A Mackazie, *The Myths of Babylon and Assyria*, full book can be downloaded

A. Kalyanaraman, *Arya Tarangini*, MacMillan, Madras, 1979.

V. Duraisamy Iyengar, *The Marvellous discoveries about Aryans, Jesus Christ and Allah*, Madras.

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopedias carefully mention the facts giving different versions. Surprisingly, the "Alexander" (Oliver Stome film) clearly depict that charging Alexander hit by an arrow shot by the Indian King sitting on an elephant and Alexander falling down from the horse with blood oozing out.

<sup>4</sup> The Greek sources faithfully accept the "geographical ignorance" of "India". Of course, the "Aleander Romance", from which the popular "history" has been constructed as "authentic" makes "Alexander" a myth also.

K. V. Ramakrishna Rao, *The Myth, Romance and Historicity of Alexander and his influence on India*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/history/research/alexandermith.asp>

**Was the Ramayana copied from Homer?:** It was the title of a paper<sup>5</sup> read by Kasinath Trimbak Telang before the Students Literary Scientific Society, Bombay on September 2, 1872. He refuted the hypothesis of Alberecht Weber<sup>6</sup> and D. C. Boyd<sup>7</sup> point by point. He exposed the fallacy in interpreting "Ramayanas" differently and tackled under the following categories:

- It is symbolized the progress of Aryan civilization against the aboriginal inhabitants of the country.
- It is a representation of the conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism.
- It is an allegory on the progress of the agricultural art.

It may be noted that the first hypothesis haunted the politicians and daunting Indians even today for many social, sociological, political and other issues and problems. The author<sup>8</sup> has already refuted the alleged Greek influence by the following points:

1. First, the scholars up to 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries traced the origins of the Greeks to India. Then, they changed the stand and started propagating the idea that Indians derived everything from the Greeks, particularly, after the "Alexander's invasion".
2. However, the more and more the archaeological evidences are studied critically, the depictions of human figures, gods and goddesses, flora and fauna etc., point to India and living Indian tradition, as no other western country or even for that matter, Greece preserves and protects such living tradition, culture, and civilization exhibited through material evidences.
3. Though, they accept that the origins of the Greek people (c.1000 BCE), their language (c.800 BCE), "Homer" (c.800 BCE), the works attributed to him (c.400 BCE), their presentation (c.200 BCE), development in stages (up to first centuries of CE), committed to writing in Greek (may be after c.400 BCE) after the development of Greek script from the Phoenician (10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE) etc., have been uncertain, but a lot of assumptions have been made, their persistent assertion that Indians learned from Greece is intriguing.
4. The arguments put forward that the Greeks themselves utterly forgotten by their descendants and therefore they are unable to fix the sate, the old home of the invaders is supposed to have lain in the north-west regions of the Balkan peninsula, the Greeks of history who had completely forgotten this far-distant past were not exclusively the descendants of these Greek invaders read with other views recorded

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<sup>5</sup> Kashinath Trimbak Telang, **Was the Ramayana Copied from Homer? A Reply to Professor Weber**, (first printed in 1873), Publishers Parlor (India), New Delhi, 1976.

<sup>6</sup> Alberecht Weber, **Indian Antiquary**, Vol.I, 1872.

....., **History of Indian Literature**, 1878, pp.191-195.

<sup>7</sup> D. C. Boyd, **Weber on the Ramayana**, Indian Antiquary, 1872, Vol. I, p.120, 172, 239 and 1875, Vol.I. Alberecht Weber, **Indian Antiquary**, Vol.I, 1872.

....., **History of Indian Literature**, 1878, pp.191-195

<sup>8</sup> K. V. Ramakrishna Rao, **Valmiki and Homer – A Critical Study of the alleged Greek influence on Ramayana**, Proceedings of the 20<sup>th</sup> International Ramayana Conference, Oriental Research Institute, Tirupati, 2005, Vol.II, pp.554-581.

subscribing to the Indian origin, make to think that scholars have changed their stand for the best reasons only known to them.

5. However, the forceful Greek origin of every Indian art and science makes one to analyze the truth, as the evidences make the bubble burst.
6. As the Ramayanic incidences occurred long back, it is evident that such happenings had been recorded in different civilizations variously, but preserving the core story. However, in Indian (and Southeast Asian and other) tradition, it has been preserved and protected to greater extent and followed and practiced even today in social, cultural, religious and inter-related forms.
7. The scholars who dub Ramayana as myth have evidently not gone into all details, as they have been experts in their respective fields. Therefore, multi-disciplinary approach should be adopted and adapted to analyze literary evidences, scrutinize the fanciful / strange descriptions presented, verify with material evidences, sift corroborate and correlate such evidences and then come to conclusions without any bias of any kind. The "myth" presenters have not "demythologized" to find out the history.

Thus, the study of writings of Max Mueller, Richard Garbe (India and Christendom), Winternitz, B. George de Huszar, Edward J. Urwick (Platonic Quest), Johann Eduard Erdmann (A History of Philosophy), William Jones etc., shows that Greeks owe to India. However, suddenly came, Vincent Smith, John Faithful Fleet, John Bentley and others, who always showed that India derived script, astronomy, sciences etc., from the Greeks. On analysis, it is found that research proceeded with professional bias, social prejudice, political dominance, pre-determined disposition and religious arrogance. The more, they came across the evidences upsetting their "Biblical flood", the more they became adamant and resolute going to the extent of manipulating with Indian history by meddling with chronology, even with the help of scientists<sup>9</sup> like Joseph Priestley and sir Isaac Newton. Thus, the hypothesis of "Valmiki copying from Homer" came out. Leon Poliakov<sup>10</sup> shows that such anti-Indian or anti-Hindu stand was necessitated because of the creation of "Aryan myth" going against humanity and particularly turning into "anti-Semitism". Even now, it is evident that the westerners work against India, because of such superiority complex. P. J. Thomas too explains such trend<sup>11</sup>. In fact, in search or origin of humanity and an alternative to their religious-philosophical model, first they selected China and then India. When India started getting all credits, the opposition mounted and turned against anti-Indian and anti-Hindu in many aspects.

**Was Homer copied from Ramayana?**: about authorship of Valmiki, none has raised any objection so far. About "Shin-eqi-unninni", the so-called first author of

<sup>9</sup> K. V. Ramakrishna Rao, *The Interest of European Scientists in Indian Calendar and Chronology*, Proceedings Volume, Dhanbad, 2003, pp.1-20.

<sup>10</sup> Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A history of races and nationalist ideas in Europe*, translated by George W. Howard, Chatto, Heinemann for Sussex University Press, London, 1974..

<sup>11</sup> P. J. Marshall, *The British Discovery of Hinduism during 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1970, p.26.

Gilgamesh, perhaps, none remembers. But, about "Homer", there have been many controversies and unhistorical hypotheses. In fact, the very existence of "Homer" has been questioned<sup>12</sup> – who Homer was, when he lived, where he was born and other details had / has been matter of doubt based on different traditions. Even the "Father of History" ventured to opine<sup>13</sup> that he lived not more than 400 years before him i.e, 900 and 850 BCE. J. B. Bury<sup>14</sup> openly declared that the author of Iliad was a native of Chios. He gives the following details:

1. **The poets** who **composed** the Iliad and Odyssey did not live **before 9<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE**.
2. The name "**Homer**" means "**Hostage**", implying that he had come from outside to settle there perhaps captured or seeking asylum. He was hailing from a family of bards.
3. Tradition made Homer the author of both the epics.
4. Many critics think that the Iliad we have is not the original Iliad of Homer, but that his poem was a much shorter work and was remoulded and expanded by succeeding poets in a way that was not entirely to its advantage.
5. It is impossible that he committed the Iliad in writing, because the earliest example of a Greek writing is available on an Attic jar of the 7<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE (thereby the writing could have attained the level of poetry with metre/scale). The Greek Alphabet was derived from the Phoenician invented in 10<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE.
6. His successors sang the songs in Ionia and Iliad was arrayed in Ionic dress.

Westerners claim that Aristarchus, a commentator who lived in Alexandria about 150 BCE divided Iliad and Odyssey into 24 books each and even in his times, **Chorizontes** or **Separatists** also dubbed as *heretics* refused to accept the authorship of both to one person. Even today, though forceful views are expressed about the "Homeric poetry" in historical sense, because of Troy and Minoan excavations, Homer and his reshaping of story are considered more a matter of myth than of historical fact, as it satisfied the

<sup>12</sup> H. G. D. Turnbull, **The Homeric Question**, Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (ABORI), Vol.2, 1921, pp.143-153.

Stanley Casson, **How Homer Wrote the Odyssey**, Antiquity, Vol.XVI, 1942.

Colin Hardie, **Homer and Odyssey Another Point of View**, Antiquity, Vol.XVI, 1942.

T. B. Webster, **Homer and the Mycenaean Tablets**, A, Vol. XXIX, 1955, pp.10-

M. A. Littauer & J. H. Crouwel, **Chariots in late bronze age Greece**, A, Vol. LVII, 1983, pp.187-192.

R. W. Hutchinson, **Notes on Minoan Chronology**, A, Vol. XXII, 1948, pp. 61-74.

R. W. Hutchinson, **Minoan Chronology Reviewed**, A, Vol. XXVIII, 1954, pp. 183-164.

<sup>13</sup> H. G. D. Turnbull, opt.cit, p.143.

<sup>14</sup> J. B. Bury, **History of Greece**, MacMillan & Co., London, `p.69. See p.50, 68, 69 etc., for discussion on Homeric question. See Notes and References, p.855, where he notes, "The Homer of the Iliad, a dweller of Chios, referring to Fick's article:

Fick, **Die Erweuterung der Menis, Bezenberber's Beitrage zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sparchen**, 1899, 20 sqq. The great role which Hector plays in the Iliad may be connected with the fact that Hector was a name in the royal family of Chios, which connected itself with Hector of Troy.

social agenda. Gregory Nagy<sup>15</sup>, the most influential Homer scholar of our generation, besides the above point opines as follows:

1. Around 1200 BCE, in the Anatolian plains, nothing would have been more frightening than a mass of Chariot warriors ready to attack.
2. Chariot fighting in the Greek-speaking world in the first millenium BCE became metaphysical, cosmological and ceremonial. It might be introduced into the Olympics around 680 BCE.
3. There was a Homer in the minds and hearts of the people who lived by the song culture that was dominated by what we know as Homeric poetry. There was a Homer for the audience of Homer, so to speak.
4. Homer's poems were being transmitted by being recited, not by being written down.
5. The five stages of evolution of Homeric poetics are as follows:
  - i. First stage: By the 5<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE, the Iliad and the Odyssey were performed at the Panathenaea (the principal religious festival of Athens) and the poems were evolving. For a long period, an amorphous collection of oral poems coalesces into a coherent cycle of poems.
  - ii. Second stage: Then, this cycle of poems gets streamlined and regularized.
  - iii. Transcript stage / phase: Poems recited by the **rhapsodes** (oral poets) at the festival of Panathenaea.
  - iv. Script stage (4<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE): The poems are fixed, scripted; writing does not matter.
  - v. Scripture stage (3<sup>rd</sup> cent.BCE): Homer is reconstructed with divinely inspired versions of the Iliad and the Odyssey. One of the Alexandrian Library scholars Aristarchus of Samothrace (c.217-145 BCE) finally nailed it down.

Thus, to Harvard classicist Gregory Nagy, the man who is called "Homer" is a myth. Therefore, a poet posing as "Homer" (hostage or unanimous) or any Greek poet or an Indian poet presenting Ramayana in "Hellenistic" garb after his conversion is evident.

According to Indian literature, tradition and consideration, the Greeks were nothing but the degraded and excommunicated "kshatriyas" / warrior-class people. Indians never considered them as alien, but their own people<sup>16</sup>. At intellectual level, the scholars of both civilizations, in spite of their exhibited separation, respected each other. Thus, "Yavanachari" / Yavana teacher<sup>17</sup> had been very common in Indian context as Brahmins used to be there at Athens during the period of Socrates (469-399 BCE). The Brahmins going to Athens, as pointed out by Max Mueller. That is why philosophers like Pythagoras and others continued to visit India, learned philosophy and others sciences and went back to Greece. Socrates and Aristotle used to have tarka / debate with Indian philosophers. Aristoxenos, a pupil of Aristotle noted that an Indian philosopher came to

<sup>15</sup> ***Is Homer Historical?***, An Archaeology Odessey – Interview with Gregory Nagy, <http://olympicwatch2004.com>

<sup>16</sup> The Puranas, the ancient Indian historical documents clearly point out the fact.

Edward Pockoke, ***India in Greece***, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi.

Col Tod, ***Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan***, Motilal Banarasisdas, New Delhi.

<sup>17</sup> The astronomical treatise, "Pancha Siddhanta" includes "Romaka Siddhanta". And Indian astronomers had their observatories at Romaka, Siddhapura, Yavakoti and Lanka.

Athens and had discussion with Socrates. Scholars point out that Plato (427-347 BCE) visited India after Persia.

Thus, along with stories, arts and sciences, Ramayana could have gone there. As they were "Indians" only, before excommunication, all the factors of culture, tradition, heritage and civilization were ingrained in their minds. However, as they wanted to project their identity separately, they started adopting Jainism<sup>18</sup>. All schisms of Jains and Greeks have been strikingly same<sup>19</sup>. The philosophy, valour and nakedness prove the fact<sup>20</sup>. Though the western scholars had found such evidences, because they upset their biblical chronology, they wanted to suppress. Not only, they withheld many

<sup>18</sup> The following narration gives the "fight" existing between "Brahmanas" – Vedic followers and "Sramanas" – Jains i.e, Indians and Greeks:

According to Plutarch, Alexander sent Onesikritos, a philosopher who belonged to the school of Diogenes the Cynic, to the Indian gymnophists, Kalanos and Dandamis. Kalanos ordered the Greek to strip off his clothes and listen to him naked or he would not converse with him. When Dandamis was told about Socrates, Pythagoras and Diogenes, "he said they appeared to him to have been men of genius", but nevertheless criticized them of subjecting their lives too much to the requirements of their laws (as against following ascetic practices).

<sup>19</sup> Edward Thomas, *Jainism or the Early Faith of Asoka*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1995 (Reprint of 1877 edition, London: Trurner & Co., 57 and 59, Ludgate Hill).

<sup>20</sup> Jeffrey M. Hurwit, *The Problem with Dexileos: Heroic and other Nudities in Greek Art*, American Journal of Archaeology, Vol.111, No.1, January 2007, pp.35-60.

John Mouratidis, *The Origin of Nudity in Greek Athletics*, Journal of Sport History, Vol.12, No.3 (Winter, 1983), pp.213-232.

David Mountfield, *Greek and Roman Erotica*, Miller Graphics, Italy, 1982.

Edward Pockoke, *Indian in Greece*, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1975.

Col. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi.

William Jones, *Works of Sir William Jones*, Vol. I, see the Chapter, *On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India*, pp.229-280.

Martin Priestman, *Romantic Atheism – Poetry and free thought, 1780-1830*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1999. Can be viewed through website, pages up to 26 from the wrapper – [http://assets.cambridge.org/0521621240/sample/052162140\\_WSCOO.PDF](http://assets.cambridge.org/0521621240/sample/052162140_WSCOO.PDF).

"The brief Remarks of Dupuis were published as a pendant to Priestley's more ambitious 'A Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos and other ancient Nations' (1799). Drawing largely on Sir William Jones's Asiatic Studies (particularly, Institutes of Hindu Law, or the Ordinances of Manu and Dissertations and Miscellaneous Pieces relating to the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences and literature of Asia), Priestley demonstrates impressive if nearly acquired mastery of the rapidly expanding field of Orientalist knowledge which, if not carefully patrolled, might lead to all kinds of marginalization of Christianity by comparison to other cultures and belief systems. This danger is represented by another Frenchman, Langles, who sees 'the religion of the Hindoos' as the source for 'those of the Egyptians and Jews who have done nothing but ape the latter, of the Chinese, of the Greeks, of the Romans, and even of the Christians'. The five books of Hindu Vedas are the prototype of 'the five books of Moses, who.....only copied Egyptians works, originally from India'. Furthermore, Langles accepts a non-Mosaic chronology where by 'many thousands of years before' the Egyptians, or Jews 'formed themselves in societies, or ever thought of forming a religion, the civilized Indians adored the supreme Being, eternal, almighty and all-wise, divided into three persons (Works, XVII, pp.139-42, 324).

As for as the chronology of India is concerned, Martin has recorded very clearly:

**"On the chronological question, Priestley again invokes the authority of Newton as well as detailing Jones's determining efforts to reduce enormous time of Hindu mythical history to proper Mosaic proportions"**

Sir Isaac Newton, *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*,



important evidences, when they found that the Gonostics, Essenes, sophists, Gymnophists, Nassenes, Ophists, Manicheans, Magians, believers wearing "white robes" or going "naked", they feared that the dominant Jaina religion spread throughout Mediterranean region embracing all discovered ancient civilization should be given credit. The mentioned "Gnostic groups" were nothing but the "Swetambaras" (the White clad) and "Digambaras" (the Sky clad). They also tactfully concealed the dominant Jain animal symbolism followed in the Mediterranean art for interpreting differently that Indians copied from them and so on. After tackling the Jains, they tried to attack "Buddhism", as it was the next dominant religion not only in the Mediterranean region, but also spread to Central Asia and China.

The sculptural and architectural evidences of them have been so dominant and strong, they could not cover up and thus decided to cut down the chronology, so that the monuments would be dated accordingly. The one Buddha image at Luxor, Egypt exposes their concocted chronology. Of course, though many scholars objected to the dating of Egyptian monuments to c.3000 BCE just to support biblical myths, the colonial powers dominated and worked systematically aiding and abetting with others.

Ironically, not less than person of status Sir Isaac Newton exposed<sup>21</sup> the incorrect, faulty and contradicting chronology of Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. This was also gathering dust, till Keynes purchased his manuscripts and all Newton works are slowly made available to scholars. His findings are:

1. He exposed the 300 years expanded chronology of the Greeks and 3000 years of that of the Egyptians.
2. He placed the Trojan war in 1225 BCE instead of 904 BCE (1225-904 = 321 years).
3. He showed that the astronomical science did not begin before the era of Nabonassar c.747 BCE.
4. He dismissed the reliability of Greek history before Herodotus
5. He doubted the first 400 years of history of Rome before the built their city.
6. He asserted that it is unscholarly to try to reconstruct Chines history for the period before 230 BCE.

Thus, if all these circumstantial evidences are taken into consideration, it is arguable and tenable that Homer was inspired by the Ramayana and like the counterparts of eastern countries (SEA etc) and he attempted to recast it in his own way. Of course, they have already accepted that "Aesop's Fables" were derived from the "Panchatantra" oif India.

**"Alexander's invasion of India" and "the Greeks" in India:** Then, came the Indo-Greeks controversies and rivalries turned to changed historiography. When one group of historians and scholars were proving that from India the arts (stories, painting, dramaturgy etc) and sciences (philosophy, logic, mathematics, astronomy, navigation

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<sup>21</sup> Frank E. Manuel, *Issac Newton, Historian*, Cambridge, 1963.  
*Sir Isasac Newton and Chronology* in <http://www.reformation.org/newton.html>

etc) went to west, another group started showing the other way round, i.e, India borrowed everything from others, particularly, after Alexander invasion in 326 BCE only, India started getting "developed" in all aspects. Even Pythagoras connection is forgotten and India has been made to borrowers of script and thus they came to "literate" only in c.300-200 BCE and therefore, they could not have written anything before, "setting fro out from the ancient conceptions of which India appears to have been cradle, the history of philosophy, as it unfolds, may be divided into five periods", thus, C. S. Henry<sup>22</sup>, records in 1849 about the origin of philosophy on the earth. The five periods mentioned are:

- I. The period of oriental philosophy which embraces whatever is known of the speculations of human mind in India, China, Persia, Chaldea, Phoenicia and Egypt.
- II. The period of Grecian philosophy, this begins with Thales and Pythagoras and continues to preserve in distinctive character down to the time of Sextus Empiricus, towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.
- III. First five centuries CE – from the Greeks to the evolution of Christian philosophy embracing oriental philosophical principles.
- IV. Middle ages – Scholasticism, Arabian philosophy.
- V. Modern period – 15<sup>th</sup> century Italy to present times including the centres of England, France and Germany.

Thus, for philosophy, India was given credit. Ironically, Indian history books do not mention about it. Philosophy is important, because, it is the evolution, development and refinement of mind, thinking and logical processes, associating with body. Epistemological, ontological and all other discriminatory, cognitive, knowing processes result in concretization of ideas into cognizable signs, symbols or objects and conversion of subjective symbolism into objective symbolism. Thus, the historical knowing and known processes aldo go with them. Thus, philosophy goes with natural scirnces, psychology, logic, epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics and ultimately politics (Artha Sastra). As Vedic people recorded such historical processes in their minds and reproduced whatever they wanted or others required, such evidences prove amply the antiquity.

**Krishna gives evidence on Sankhya:** Krishna (c.3100 BCE) gives evidence about Sankhya, thus upsetting the dating of Kapila. So the westerners tried to confuse that Bhagawat Gita was written later or even continued to be written during first centuries. Had Krishna learned from Kapila, then, Kapila has to be placed before c.3100 BCE or Krishna learned from Kapila, Krishna comes to c.8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE. for them, the later is convenient, but still, the Greek factors gave chronological itches, as most of the biblical writings are to be derived, compiled and written down from the Greek sources, they did not want anything that has to do with Indian. So they started historical attack on Krishna, as already the western scholars proved that Assyrian, Egyptian, and Greek myths from Krishna<sup>23</sup>. However, "Krishna baktas" provided archaeological evidences to

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<sup>22</sup> C. S. Henry, *Epitome of the History of Philosophy*, Aberdeen: A Brown & Co., London, 1849, pp.15-16.

It is quoted to prove how the trend has been changed from pro-India to anti-India.

<sup>23</sup> John M. Robertson, *Hindu Mythology and Christianity*, Swati Publications, New Delhi, 1989.



make them remember that Krishna has only converted to Crishna or Cristna, Cristhos or Christ. When C. F. C. Volney<sup>24</sup> pointed out this, there had been commotion among the clergy.

As the Greeks used to mention about the presence of "Brahmins" there, their role cannot be ignored. Hindu temples were the most visible symbols of the Hindu religion in the Mediterranean region. R. C. Majumdar<sup>25</sup> records, "According to the Syrian writer Zenob<sup>26</sup> there was an Indian colony in the canton of Taron on the upper Euphrates, to the west of Lake van, as early as the second century BCE. The Indians built two temples containing images of gods about 16 and 22 feet high. When about AD 304, St. Gregory came to destroy these images, he was strongly opposed by the Hindus, but were defeated them and smashed the images". Their names are Indian. In 149 BCE., Gissaneh and Demeter, two princes of Kannauj, Uttarpradesh tried to plot against their father, Dinaks Pall. These names are from Armnean sources and Gissaneh could be Krishna and Demeter, Juganath. Dinaks Pall could be Dineash Pal. Not only that, it proves the Indian Rajput control over the areas connected with Vikramaditya, which has been blacked out by the western historians. Interestingly, a recent report<sup>27</sup> noted, "*The conspiracy was detected and the princes fled to the sub-Caucasus kingdom of Armenia. At that time the country was not landlocked as it is now; it had access to the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and had merchant ships that used to go to India and China. The two princes and their families, courtiers and a small army most probably travelled by ship and did not cross the difficult overland route to Armenia*". This again proves the navigational capabilities of Indians and their easy accessibility with those areas. Note, that they were going there with families and armies, clearly shows that they were not strangers or invaders, but just going to their own or frequented places. About the erection of Garudadwaja for Krishna in India by Heliodorus, a Greek devotee is well known. Therefore, thrusting Greek influence on India is not sustainable, as historians have to consider all connected factors cogently and should not interpret in isplation according to their convenience or ignorance.

**The sojourn of Greek philosophers to India:** Till 19<sup>th</sup> century, the western scholars were accepting that the Greek philosophers coming to India for learning. Then, they changed their stand and interpreting the "striking similarities" found in the other way. Thus, Schroedor, Hopkins, Garbe, Keith, Weber and others shifted their stands. Floating three possibilities –

1. Borrowing and influence,
2. Common origin of two and
3. Independent parallel development of two.

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<sup>24</sup> C. F. C. Volney, ***The Ruins, or Meditation on the Revolutions of Empires and the Law of Nature***, Truth Seeker Co., New York, 1890.

<sup>25</sup> R. C. Majumdar, ***The Age of Imperial Unity***, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, p.633.

<sup>26</sup> Journal of royal Asiatic society, 1904, p.309.

<sup>27</sup> Romesh Battacharji, ***The remote village of Odzun reveals an Indian connection***, for details: in Frontline magazine, Vol,23 – Issue 15, Jul,29-Aug.11, 2006. <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/fline/f12315/stories/20060811000106600.htm>

they put forward many confused ideas<sup>28</sup>. But, their problem had not been historical but biblical, as the Greek sources formed the basis of construction of "Bible", they wanted to suppress, scrub off and eliminate all Indian bonds and linkages.

The Greek philosopher Thale (c.625-547 BCE), Pythagoras (570-490 BCE), Heraclitus (c.535-475 BCE), Xenophanes (c.570-470 BCE), Parmenides (c.515-450 BCE), Empedocles (c.495-435 BCE), Anaxagoras (c.500 BCE), Platonius (c.204-249 BCE) and others knew India philosophical system. They learned it either coming to India or migrating from India and converting to "Greek". The Sankhya philosophy deals with ideas and numbers, subjective and objective symbolisms, concretization of ideas with discrimination, thus, it forms the basis for the mind, thinking processes – conception, perception, development and evolution. Kapila, the founder is placed to 8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE, though such ideas had been before that period. As the Greek philosophers derived and learned from the Sankhya philosophy, they placed in that bracketed period. In any case, it proves that India precedes the Greek and not the other way.

**Gilgamesh arrived:** It is evident that "Gilgamesh" was read in such a way that it was made to counter Ramayana, when "Alexander" and other "Greeks" were "defeated" and driven out<sup>29</sup>. Just like IVC, it has not been deciphered satisfactorily. But, still, the plain reading of the small story disputably written on the much mutilated tablets has no relevancy with Ramayana. If at all, any resemblance could be noted, actually, Gilgamesh should have been copied from Valmiki Ramayana. As the Persians had reportedly destroyed many monuments there, only few broken ones have been recovered. The claims of "Gilgamesh" have to be studied by Indians carefully.

**1. The historical Gilgamesh was a Sumerian king of Uruk around 2700 BCE**

First, the date was determined astronomically and later the found archaeological evidences were matched with it. Thus, Indians could also date the Kings accordingly and place them in the pre and post-Mahabharat periods.

**2. Sumerian fragments of the legend that grew up around him have been found dating back to about 2000 BCE.**

Note how the "fragments" of the "legend" grew up and it is dated to 2000 BCE. However, "Indian full length literature/ Iihasas " should have grown only after c.350 BCE! This only for biblical interpretation. Biblical / theological scholars take it to c.3000 BCE.

**3. The most complete version of the story comes from twelve clay tablets in Akkadian copied by Shin-eqi-unninni around the seventh century BCE**

Note how the "seventh century BCE" evidence is taken to assert the 2000 / 3000 BCE date. The so-called tablets have been completely damaged and only fragments have been deciphered and the story has been cast.

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<sup>28</sup> Nalinee M. Chapkar, *Ancient India and Greece – A Study of their cultural contacts*, Ajanta Publications, New Delhi, 1977, p.79.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*, (Thirty-Nine Firsts in Man's Recorded History), The University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, USA, 1981.

**4. They were found in the ruins of the Library of Ashurbanipal of Nineveh and, like the earlier Sumerian tablets, were written in the "wedge-shaped" script known as cuneiform.**

Persians had destroyed it completely and the claim of "library" is to lend some sort of "authority" and "authenticity" among the scholars. Anyway, if "such advanced people" as they claim could have had only "the tablets" as "books" in their so-called "library", it has to be studied thoroughly. By the way, how many "libraries", Indians should have had on the banks of different rivers. When so many conferences were held in the Naimisaranya, how many books would have been discussed and debated?

**5. A summary of the story derived from these tablets on the University of Washington's World Cultures Home Page maintained by Richard Hooker<sup>30</sup>.**

One can see the damaged nature of tablets with cuneiform writings on it.

**6. The fullest surviving version, from which the summary here is taken, is derived from twelve stone tablets, in the Akkadian language, found in the ruins of the library of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria 669-633 B.C., at Nineveh.**

The library was destroyed by the Persians in 612 B.C., and all the tablets are damaged<sup>31</sup>. The fact is accepted, that is the 7<sup>th</sup> century tablets had been in the mutilated condition and the language was mentioned as "Akkadian".

**7. 1500 to 500 BCE:** The dating of Genesis is uncertain, since the preservation of papyri is not nearly as good as that of stone. Liberal scholars place the date between 1,500 and 500 B.C., although the events are claimed to have occurred several thousand years earlier.

Note the lower limit going down to c.500 BCE!

**8. How the dating is done?** National Geographic Society explorer-in-residence Robert Ballard and his team have discovered evidence that humans once lived in an area now covered by the Black Sea north of Turkey:

- The mixture of freshwater shells and saltwater shells in the area indicates that the present saltwater sea was once a freshwater lake.
- Indications of an ancient coastline under the Black Sea suggest that the land once extended miles farther than the present coastline.
- The discovery of a structure similar to those built during the Stone Age indicates that the submerged land was once inhabited by people.

Why in India such methods are not applied? We know that the "Flood tradition" has been the ancient in India and it has been accepted by the western scholars also. So if could date the samples of water or vegetation, then naturally the date of them could be matched with c.3100 BCE (Mahabharat period) or C.4400 BCE (Ramayana period).

<sup>30</sup> at <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/MESO/GILG.HTM> <<http://www.wsu.edu/~.../MESO/GILG.HTM>>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.mythome.org/Gilgamesh.html> <<http://www.mythome.o...Gilgamesh.html>>

9. Ballard has proposed a theory that the area was suddenly submerged by a great flood—perhaps the flood described in the Biblical story of Noah's Ark or in the Mesopotamian text, the Gilgamesh Epic. Ballard's team hopes to get permission from the Turkish government to take a sample of the wooden artifacts they have discovered. They could then perform a carbon dating test to determine if this human settlement indeed fits into the timeline of Noah and the Biblical flood<sup>32</sup>.

So to uphold the biblical myth only, they work always "scientifically" correlating and corroborating the existing evidences.

10. Ramayana was inspired by Gligamesh. Reading of " Gligamesh " shows has no correlation with Valmiki Ramayana, as the characters Gilgamesh, Aruru, Enkidu, Humbaba, Istar, etc have no relevance with Ramayana. Therefore, to say that Valmiki was inspired by Gilgamesh has no basis at all and it is only a wishful thinking. The 12 tablet "small story" cannot be a match for the full length Itihasa. Thus, it is evident that Ramayana should and could have spread to west influencing Gilgamesh. Then, the dating of Ramayana goes back to c.3000 BCE. (it is stated just for argument).

Thus, the methodology applied to "Gilgamesh" is applied to India, definitely, the Indian evidences go beyond the "Mosaic flood" i.e, c.3100 BCE and therefore, the influence of "Gligamesh" next to Greeks in the region is natural considering the other evidences.

**Ram, Raman etc., found in the "western" literature and inscriptions:** In Zend literature, the usage of Ram and Raman has been significant. Mithra is invoked with "Raman khvastra" meaning "peace possessing good posture" (mano rama mano rame). Not only, Mithra, but also, Vayu (the divinity of mysterious air) is connected with Raman. The meaning of "ram" in "Ram yast" hymn of Avesta is naturally, "joy and peace"<sup>33</sup>.

The Sun-god "Surya" and its forms are also surprisingly appearing there. One of the conquering gods of Kassites is "Suris" dated to c.1760 BCE. Indian, "Surya" has been incorporated as "Ra", as Brahma in "Irosis" (Ishvara) father of "Horis" and Siva "set". Orisis fought with Set and killed by Horus. This is similar to Brahma fighting with Vishnu, but checked by Siva by cutting of one of his five heads<sup>34</sup>. The Egyptian clay tablets dated to 1400 BCE mentions that the local dynasties of Palestine and Syria are named after vEdia gods. Hanuman was worshipped as "cynocephalus" in Egypt. Of course, the Boghazkoi inscription dated to c.1450 BCE clearly mention Mithra, Varuna, Indra and Nasatya among the invoked gods in the treaty made.

The evidence for this was "Indo-Aryan" names of the Kings and the invocation of Vedic gods: A treaty preserved by the Hittites with Mittani King Shattowaza has them listing gods named "Mitrasil", "Arunsil" and "Indar", which are clearly Vedic gods Mitra, Varuna and Indira, the first two simply with "-il", a semitic element for "god" added<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Read the following also from the website: Is the Biblical Flood Account a Modified Copy of the Epic of Gilgamesh? by Rich Deem <<http://www.godandsci...rg/contact.php>>

<sup>33</sup> H. D. K. Mizra, **Outlines of Parsi History**, Published by the author in Bombay, 1987, p.382.

<sup>34</sup> S. M. El. Mansouri, **Art-Culture of India & Egypt**, Firma K, L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1959, p.88.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.friesian.com/notes/newking.htm>

Mentioning this, some western scholars<sup>36</sup> are so surprised that these gods are appearing historically in the western side of Iran. S. K. Chatterjee<sup>37</sup> has shown the similarities between Indians and Ethiopians pointing out Nubian King Netek-Amen and his queen Amen-tari, four handed Lion-god etc.

**Paintings and sculptures without explanation:** The origin of art of all ancient civilizations has been in mystery, perhaps, purposely, in spite of tremendous research conducted by the world scholars of connected fields. Many times, they attribute to unknown, mysterious, mythological people without naming. But, the art-form available has been a fact and it was executed by man, is also an historical truth. So by comparing the artistic features and other characteristics, they have to come to a conclusion. But, they do not. Andre Lefevre<sup>38</sup> pointed out the connection between such mysterious people named as Iberians, Pelasgians, Ligurians, Sicanians, Etruscans with Aryans. The same view is presented by James Bailey<sup>39</sup>. There has been striking similarities and resemblances among the art-forms of early Egyptians, Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman and other civilizations. The people behind are mentioned variously as Iberians, Pelasgians, Ligurians, Sicanians, Etruscans, Druids, Celts and so on.

In the context, the sculptures, paintings and figures on seals from the Assyrian, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Ionian and Etruscans have resemblance with Indian. Their rock-cut architecture and the wall paintings inside resemble Buddhist and Hindu art-form. The photographs of reconstructions of King Porsenna's mausoleum reveal a striking resemblance to the temples in Petra, Jordan and to the Lama-Buddhist temple in Peking<sup>40</sup>. The characters depicted have been typically Indian, of course done by "Hellenized" Indian painter<sup>41</sup>.

Any ordinary Indian or even villagers would tell what represent by looking at such depictions. The author conducted such studies with villagers both in north and south and there has been unanimity in identifying the pictures and stories related to them. They are not historians, sociologists, anthropologists or even Assyriologists, Egyptologists etc., but their identification and narration have been striking and matching. Thus, the Ramayana like sculptures of Assyrian, Sumerian, Egyptian, Hittite and other ancient civilizations were interpreted differently, with Gilgamesh, they asserted that it only gave core story to Valmiki. However, they could not explain the existence of tradition of Ramayana more than 2,500 years. Gilgamesh or Iliad are not mentioned and followed like that for the same period continuing even today. Definitely,

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<sup>36</sup> Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, the Netherlands, 1966, Vol.I, pp.14-15.

<sup>37</sup> Sunit Kumar Chatterji, *India and Ethiopian from the Seventh Century BC*, The Asiatic society, Calcutta, 2004.

<sup>38</sup> Andre Levevre, *Philosophy Historical and Critical*, Part-II, Chap. "On organic Evolution", 1888, p.503.

<sup>39</sup> James Bailey, *The God-Kings, & Titans*, Hodde and Stoughten, UK, 1973. These two - Andre Levevre and James Bailey - are cited for the mind change of Europeans.

<sup>40</sup> Gaither Stewart, Etruscans: *The Legend of the Labyrinth of the Hen*, see: <http://www.critiquemagazine.com/article/etruscans.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.mysteriousetruscans.com>; Paintings and sculptures can be accessed from the site: <http://www.mysteriousetruscans.com/caerlions.html>

the "copiers" could not impose such "alien elements" on Indians and making them to nurture, while the "originators" die and disappear!

**The first Epic Gilgamesh or Ramayana?:** It is evident that "Gilgamesh" is brought in just to reduce the chronology of Ramayana. Already it is pointed out that the written form of it comes down to c.500 BCE, that too, in highly mutilated form. Therefore, by any such imagination, the Gilgamesh of hundred lines could match with Ramayana. That Jains and Buddhists decided to adapt and adopt Ramayana proves that it could have been very popular before their periods. At present, this could be c.800 BCE acceptable to historians. However, considering the full details of both, Gilgamesh has nothing to do with Ramayana. Gilgamesh has also nothing to do with mass following, social respect and religious sanctity even today like Ramayana with cultural affinity and traditional empathy. However, if the evidences of Ganges Valley Civilization are taken into consideration, definitely, the dating of Ramayana goes before Mahabharat i.e, c.3100 BCE. Newton's dating of Egyptian monuments reduced by 3,000 years and that of Greeks by 300 years is also, here notable. Both had been done evidently, to take the Egyptian monuments to well before flood and the Greeks to BCE period, so that important events of both Old Testament and New Testament get attested. The biblical archaeological has been highly controversial one and here, it cannot be discussed. In any case, the following factors place Ramayana before others:

1. As the date of Mahabharat has been established around c.3100 BCE, the Ramayana could be placed before it.
2. The paintings and sculptures of Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and other related civilizations exhibit characteristic pictures, which have no explanation in their respective cultures.
3. The painters and sculptors could not have done such depictions, had they no idea of what they were depicting – painting and sculpting consciously.
4. Interestingly, they have explanations in Ramayana, as stated, the study conducted by the author proves such position.

Therefore, definitely, Ramayana enjoys the status of First Epic and Valmiki the Adhi Kavi or the First Epic Poet.

**Ganges Valley Civilization (GVC) to Indus (IVC) to Saraswati (SVC):** The Gangetic Valley Civilization (GVC) was much talked about during the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries by all scholars of different fields, explorers, missionaries and others. Many times, even reputed scholars and writers accepted it as the origin of human race. When they started discussing about the development of ideas, intellectuality, philosophy, arts and sciences, they pointed to GVC only. Their writings went on till IVC was discovered and suddenly, it was given importance, because it is nearer "biblical places". Moreover, the IVC seals depiction match with that of Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian and other Mediterranean civilizations.

After independence, Pakistan started "Islamic" interpretation to the IVC and even claiming that IVC belonged to Pakistan and India has no claim on it. However, as more IVC evidences had come out at Lothal, Kalibangan and other places, extending up to



Ganges valley regions, particularly, the clusters located on submerged / under flowing Saraswati river, the Indian part of IVC is mentioned as Saraswati Valley Civilization (SVC). The tradition of Ganges, association of Saraswati with, Triveni Sangamam etc., goes back to Vedic period. Thus, Ganges Valley Civilization predates SVC and IVC.

Pierre Sonnerat<sup>42</sup> (1748-1814) was a French naturalist and explorer who visited India and as a true scholar, he was against the prevalent racism in the European circles. During his visits to Asia, he marvelled at the rich culture of the Indians. In of his books, he writes, "*Ancient India gave to world its religions and philosophies; Egypt and Greece owe India their wisdom and it is known that Pythagoras went to India to study under Brahmins, who were the most enlightened of human beings*". Like him, there were many scholars supporting Indian origins. However, the Jesuits turned the tables against India.

**Politicization has created disrespect to the Epics:** The early 1990s witnessed two aspects of Ramayana, one creating a great impact on crores of India and thus reviving the Ramayana spirit through the teleserial broadcast and the other one is associated with the controversy related to Ramjanmabhumi issue. Perhaps, everything in India was divided for and against Ramayana, particularly, the historicity of it. Surprisingly, voluminous material giving many evidences came out publicly. However, the mounting criticism has been only against Ramayana in all aspects. Under the guise of opposing majority communalism, fundamentalism etc., the print and electronic media and even western scholars have completely turned against Ramayana, which is not a good sign of intellectual honesty, professional ethics and academic excellence.

Evidently, it is surprised to note how the Professors<sup>43</sup> of so-called great universities of US, suddenly indulging in the cheap criticism of Ramayana relying upon literature like A. K. Ramanujam at one side and the rabid anti-Hindu atheist E. V. Ramasamy Naicker at other side! Of course, the Babri-masjid people also presented these vulgarized outbursts as "historical evidences" before the courts to decide "the historicity of the temple of Rama at Ayodhya"!

Ironically, the eminent historians have also stooped down to a shameful level to condemn, criticize and disrespect their colleague-professionals, instead of considering the evidences in historical perspective. Take the example of the 16-line inscription found there at Ayodhya and other artifacts. The eminent historians<sup>44</sup> accused that they were planted by the "karsevaks" (the servants who came there to offer to build temple)! There had been thousands of police, para-military forces and others, particularly, the media

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<sup>42</sup> Pierre Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes orientales et à la Chine, Paris: Froulé-Nyon-Barrois*, 1782.

<sup>43</sup> Paula Richman, *Many Ramayanas, (The Diversities of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia)*, University of California Press, USA, 1991.

B. R. Ambedkar, *The riddles of Ramayana*, Education Department, Govt. of Maharastra, Bombay, 1987.

These are cited to show – whether professional or otherwise, how criticism has been easy, when it comes to mere question of criticism quoting others and disrespecting the facts of history.

<sup>44</sup> R. S. Sharma and his group openly made statements to that effect before the print and electronic media.



persons recording every event. How could then, none noticed the carrying such a lengthy inscription and artifacts from unknown destinations to the disputed site?

Unfortunately, the fight between the historians, archaeologists, epigraphists and other respectable scholars have denigrated not only their position, but also the position of history and historiography of India. Ordinary people, who got awareness of the issue, were however, disillusioned by their unbecoming and unscholarly fight.

**Historical and archaeological evidences:** the iron in India has been shrouded with mystery, as the European scholars have debated with it ambiguously, instead of presenting facts straight away. For example, the musings over "snarling iron" of Chanhudaro, an IVC site has been intriguing, as its date going back to mid 3<sup>rd</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century millennium BCE i.e, c.2,500-2,000 BCE. Ironically, the 'snarling iron' found in the form of ingots along with metallic pans, chisels, an unfinished carved shell ball, a seal etc., was not photographed or drawn as pointed out by Paul Yule<sup>45</sup>. Startled by it Mackay made a guess that it might be bronze. However, Malati J. Shinde<sup>46</sup> declares it as "meteorite iron" and the weapons made with it, there have been several unanswered points<sup>47</sup>.

1. The Egyptian and Mesopotamian irons dated to c.3500 and 300 BCE have been analyzed and found to be meteorite origin, as it contained 7.5% AND 10.9% Nickel respectively.
2. The Egyptian iron articles reportedly recovered from Saqqarah, Abusir, Dahshur, Ensah etc., are "very suspicious" and they were made of meteoric iron.
3. The Nubian spearhead (dated to c.1800) was made of meteoric iron.
4. The Nubian spearhead was an import from some very early iron-working nation in Asia.
5. The earliest man-made / smelted iron example is found among the Hittites dated to c.1200 BCE.
6. Egyptians claimed that "they obtained their iron from the sky", i.e, origin not known or mentioned.

Actually, here the question is the Indian use of horse, iron or light spoke-wheeled chariots, as they are the evidences for the epic to have taken place. Such war strategy is found in RV (CD: 40-92) and therefore, its continuance in Ramayana need not be doubted. The horse was also domesticated in the IVC (Shinde 1991; 1997: 271-290) and is frequently mentioned in the RV in the Asura context. Similarly the chariot with the spiked wheel was also in use in the IC (I. Mahadevan 1977:32-42). However, the western scholars argue that the word for horse is a Sumerian word borrowed into Akkadian.

<sup>45</sup> Paul Yule, **A Harappan 'snarling iron' from Chanhudaro**, *Antiquity*, Vol.62, 1988, pp.116-118.  
Dilip Chakrabarti, **The Beginning of Iron in India**, *Antiquity*, Vol.L, 1976, pp.114-124.  
E. J. H. Mackay, **Further Excavations at Moenjodaro**, ASI, New Delhi, 1938.

The bun shape ingots are mentioned in the following references: Yule 1985: nos 357-60; Mackay 1938: 487, pl.121.34; 493, pl.132.37; 493, pl.132.38, 39; Yule 1982: 37 fig.18.25

<sup>46</sup> Malati J. Shinde, **Obstacles to identifying the origins of India's history and culture**, <http://www.jies.org/Shenge.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> G. A. Wainwright, **The Coming of Iron, Antiquity**, Vol.X, 1936, pp.5-24.

Similarly, the words Skt. Ratha, chariot and sarathi, charioteer have cognates in Akkadian (Shinde 1997:227-228). The Indus people knew meteorite iron and used extensively with copper and bronze. A piece of 'snarling iron' is recorded at Chanhu daro (Yule.1988). however, the western scholars interpreted that the use of these items as criteria was invented by the Indo-Europeans to prove the superiority of the "Aryan culture" and not confirmed by the RV or the IC which both know the use of horse (Mackay 1943: pl.LXXVII, Rao 1997: pl.XXIII; A. Shinde 1997: figs.1-6).

The archaeological evidences are also coming out pushing the date of iron to c.1900 BCE in the GVC itself:

1. Rakesh Tiwari<sup>48</sup>, ASI, UP has proved the presence of iron smelters of 19<sup>th</sup> cent.BCE on the Ganga basin.
2. Earlier, Dilip Chakrabarti<sup>49</sup> too has shown the usage of iron during c.1100-1000 BCE period.
3. However, the usage of Iron has been continuous in India by the tribals over thousands of years. The iron smelting of Kasia hills<sup>50</sup> went back to pre-historic period (c.before 1500-1000 BCE?).
4. J. H. Rivet<sup>51</sup> came across many implements found in Junapani burrows, Nagpur District. Comparing with European counterparts, he opined that they belonged to pre-historic period without giving date. As they were found in megalithic sites, they could go to c.2500-2000 BCE and were made-made unlike the Egyptian or Mesopotamian.

The persistent western view on Indian iron is that at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, it was –

- i. Probably introduced from the Middle East, appears in the NW of India first –
  - a. Spreads to the South by 500 BCE
  - b. Sri Lanka: low, wind-blown furnaces on hillsides.
- ii. Late 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE: Indian iron was recognized as "special" and exported to the west – earliest references to what was probably the Indian crucible steel.
- iii. Tradition of making huge forgings: Delhi pillar dated 3<sup>rd</sup> cent.CE

But, as pointed out, the idependent and indigenouse evidence for iron smelting goes back to c.1900 BCE and therefore, the export of iron of all categories – wootz, special, alloy etc., to the west is sustainable and authenticated.

Though, the horizontal excavations were not carried out, there is no doubt about the existence of Ayodhya and other cities mentioned in the Ramayana, such as Kausambi, Mithila, Kanyakubja etc., at least by 1000 BCE. This was the recording of H. D.

<sup>48</sup> Rakesh Tewari, *The Origins of iron-working in India: new evidence from the central Ganga Plain and the Eastern Vindhya*, Antiquity, UK, September 2003, pp.536-545.

<sup>49</sup> Dilip Chakrabarti, *The Beginning of Iron in India*, Antiquity, Vol.L, 1976, pp.114-124.

<sup>50</sup> Henry Yule, *Notes on Iron of the Kasia Hills*, Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Vol.XI, NS: 1842, UK, pp.853-857 with a figure of smelting site etc.

J. M. Heath, *On Indian Iron and Steel*, JARS, Vol.V, pp.390-397.

<sup>51</sup> J. H. Rivett-Carnac, *Pre-historic remains in Central Asia*, JASB, Vol.XLVIII, (48), 1879, pp.1-16.

Sankalia<sup>52</sup> made in 1972. He added that the core of the Ramayana story viz., Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and the exile of Rama with Sita and her being kidnapped by Ravana – was there and was known at this time i.e, 1000 BCE. After that, definitely, many archaeological evidences have turned out, but the Ramajanmabhumi issue made the scholars at loggerheads, instead of proceeding positively, they started engaged in the ideological struggle. The WAC-3 (1995) proceedings, resolutions and recordings expose the clear bias against India and Hindus. The media has gone to the extent of blacking out the evidences of B. B. Lal, though he has pointed out the evidences for the epics Ramayana and Mahabharat. Therefore, historical knowledge in this aspect has to be updated and we cannot rely upon the past writings as final.

**Indian art-form compared with others with earlier contacts:** The Indian art-form is compared with other civilizations specifically as follows:

- ⊙ Knobbed pottery vases, cotton etc., came to Sumer from India.
- ⊙ Assurbanipal (668-626 BCE) cultivated Indian plants including the “wool-bearing trees” of India.
- ⊙ According to the *Skandha Purana*, Egypt (Africa) was known as Sancha-Dvipa continent mentioned in Sir Willliams Jones’ dissertation on Egypt. At Alexandria, in Egypt, Indian scholars were a common sight: they are mentioned both by Chrysostomus (100 A.D.) and by Clement (200 A.D.) Indirect contact between ancient India and Egypt through Mesopotamia is generally admitted, but evidence of a direct relationship between the two is at best fragmentary.
- ⊙ Peter Von Bohlen (1796-1840), German Indologist, compared India with ancient Egypt. He thought there was a cultural connection between the two in ancient times. There are elements of folk art, language, and rural culture of Bengal which have an affinity with their Egyptian counterparts and which have not been explained satisfactorily in terms of Aryan, Mongolian, or so-called Dravidian influences. There are similarities between place names in Bengal and Egypt and recently an Egyptian scholar, El Mansouri, has pointed out that in both Egypt and India the worship of cow, sun, snake, and river are common.
- ⊙ A terracotta mummy from Lothal vaguely resembles an Egyptian mummy and a similar terracotta mummy is found also at Mohenjo-daro. In this context it is of interest to note that the Egyptian mummies are said to have been wrapped in Indian muslin. Characters similar to those on the Indus seals have also been found on tablets excavated from Easter Island.
- ⊙ Gordon Childe has said, «in other words, in the third millennium B.C. India was already in a position to contribute to the building up of the cultural tradition that constitutes our spiritual heritage as she notoriously has done since the time of Alexander».
- ⊙ In his book, *Empire of the Soul: Some Journeys in India*, Paul William Roberts, states: «Recent research and scholarship make it increasingly possible to believe

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<sup>52</sup> H. D. Sankalia, ***Ramayana Myth or Reality***, Progress Publishing Company, New Delhi, ..... , ***The Ramayana in Historical Perspective***, MacMillan India Limited, New Delhi, 1982.

that the Vedic era was the lost civilization whose legacy the Egyptians and the Indians inherited. There must have been one. There are too many similarities between hieroglyphic texts and Vedic ones, these in turn echoed in somewhat diluted form and a confused fashion by the authors of Babylonian texts and the Old Testament».

- ◎ It is believed that the South Indians went to Egypt and laid the foundation of its civilization there. The Egyptians themselves had the tradition that they originally came from a land called Punt, which an historian of the West, Dr. H.R. Hall, thought referred to some part of India.
- ◎ Klaus K. Klostermaier, in his book *A Survey of Hinduism* says: «For several centuries a lively commerce developed between the ancient Mediterranean world and India, particularly the ports on the Western coast. The most famous of these ports was Sopara, not far from modern Bombay, which was recently renamed Mumbai. Present day Cranganore in Kerala, identified with the ancient Muziris, claims to have had trade contacts with Ancient Egypt under Queen Hatshepsut, who sent five ships to obtain spices, as well as with ancient Israel during King Solomon's reign».
- ◎ Max Müller had also observed that the mythology of Egyptians (and also that of the Greeks and Assyrians) is wholly founded on Vedic traditions. Eusebius, a Greek writer, has also recorded that the early Ethiopians emigrated from the river Indus and first settled in the vicinity of Egypt.
- ◎ In an essay entitled *On Egypt from the Ancient Book of the Hindus*, British Lt. Colonel Wilford gave abundant evidence proving that ancient Indians colonized and settled in Egypt. The British explorer John Hanning Speke, who in 1862 discovered the source of the Nile in Lake Victoria, acknowledged that the Egyptians themselves didn't have the slightest knowledge of where the Nile's source was. However, Lt. Colonel Wilford's description of the Hindus' intimate acquaintance with ancient Egypt led Speke to Ripon Falls, at the edge of Lake Victoria.
- ◎ Heinrich Karl Brugsch agrees with this view and writes in his *History of Egypt* that, «we have a right to more than suspect that India, eight thousand years ago, sent a colony of emigrants who carried their arts and high civilization into what is now known as Egypt». He also declared that<sup>53</sup>, "India may have sent a colony of advanced settlers to Egypt eight thousand years ago, bringing arts and sciences with them. The Egyptians themselves preserved memory of a land called Punt, situated along the shores of the Indian Ocean—a sacred homeland from which their gods, including Amon, Horus, and Hathor, were said to have come. Reliefs in the temple of Queen Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari depict Punt as a vibrant land whose trees, animals, and rulers bear unmistakable Indian characteristics."
- ◎ Friedrich Schlegel<sup>54</sup> noted that, "...the ancient physiognomy of which (if we may so speak) bears such a resemblance in some points to that of Hindustan, that when the

<sup>53</sup> John Pickering, *Toward the Eastern Origins of Civilization - A Reframing of John Pickering's 1843 Address with Integrated Historical and Cross-Cultural Sources*, American Oriental Society, Vol.I, No.1, 1843, pp.1-78.

<sup>54</sup> von Schlegel, Friedrich. *Lectures on the history of literature, ancient and modern: from the German of Frederick Schlegel*. Moss & Company, 1878. vol. i. pp. 192-202.

English several years ago brought an army of native soldiers from India to Egypt, the soldiers prostrated themselves in reverence of the temples and deities of that country, as they would have done in those of their own.

- © The Egyptians, as we have said, according to their own records came from a mysterious land on the shore of the Indian Ocean, the sacred Punt; the original home of their gods, who followed thence after their people who had abandoned them to the valley of the Nile, led by Amon, Hor and Hathor. This region was the Egyptian "Land of the Gods", *Pa-Nuter*, in old Egyptian, or Holyland, and now proved beyond any doubt to have been quite a different place from the Holyland of Sinai. By the pictorial hieroglyphic inscription found on the walls of the temple of the Queen Haslitop at Der-el-babri, we see that this Punt can be no other than India. For many ages the Egyptians traded with their old homes, and the reference here made by them to the names of the Princes of Punt and its fauna and flora, especially the nomenclature of various precious woods to be found but in India, leave us scarcely room for the smallest doubt that the old civilization of Egypt is the direct outcome of that the older India.
- © Edward Pococke says: «At the mouths of the Indus dwell a seafaring people, active, ingenious, and enterprising as when, ages subsequent to this great movement, these people coast along the shores of Mekran, traverse the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and again adhering to the sea-board of Oman, Hadramant, and Yeman, they sail up the Red Sea; and again ascending mighty stream that fertilizes a land of wonders, found the kingdom of Egypt, Nubia and Abyssinia. These are the same stock that, centuries subsequently to this colonization, spread the blessings of civilization over Hellas and her islands» (*India in Greece*).
- © Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeren (1760-1842), an Egyptologist, has observed: «It is perfectly agreeable to Hindu manners that colonies from India, i.e., Banian families should have passed over Africa, and carried with them their industry, and perhaps also their religious worship. Whatever weight may be attached to Indian tradition and the express testimony of Eusebius confirming the report of migrations from the banks of the Indus into Egypt, there is certainly nothing improbable in the event itself, as a desire of gain would have formed a sufficient inducement» (*Historical Researches - Heeran*).
- © Ethiopia, as is universally admitted now, was colonized by the Hindus. Sir William Jones says: «Ethiopia and Hindustan were possessed or colonized by the same extraordinary race» (*Asiatic Researches - volume I*).
- © Philostratus introduces the Brahman Iarchus by stating to his auditor that the Ethiopians were originally an Indian race compelled to leave India for the impurity contracted by slaying a certain monarch to whom they owed allegiance. Two ancient civilizations, contemporaneous, both growing along the banks of rivers which flow down from mountains, through desert. Both rivers support crocodiles and both people worship river gods and crocodiles and worship cows and have a wonderfully developed cosmogony. Both have a form of caste system. Both have contributed immensely to world culture in almost every field. Surely they must have interacted despite the vast geographical distances involved. There is evidence to

suggest contact between the two from around BCE 3000 with the findings of Indian muslin, cotton and *dhania* (coriander) in Egypt.

- © Gustav Oppert (1836-1908) born in Germany, taught Sanskrit and comparative linguistics at the Presidency College, Madras for 21 years. He wrote a book, *Die Gottheiten der Indier*, in 1905. In his book Oppert discussed the chief gods of the Aryans and he compares Aditi with Egyptian Isis and the Babylonian Ea.
- © Professor Sir Flinders Petrie (1853-1942), British archaeologist and Egyptologist, author of *Egypt and Israel* (1911) observes: «The presence of a large body of Indian troops in the Persian army in Greece in 480 BC shows how far west the Indian connections were carried; and the discovery of modeled heads of Indians at Memphis, of about the fifth century BC shows that Indians were living there for trade». He feels that the doctrine of rebirth, favored by keeping all bodily senses in abeyance, and brought to pass by driving out the twelve inner torments by their antitheses, was accepted in Egypt under the Indian influence.
- © Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bissing (1873-1956) wrote: «The land of Punt in the Egyptian ethnological traditions has been identified by the scholars with the Malabar coast of Deccan. From this land ebony, and other rich woods, incense, balsam, precious metals, etc. used to be imported into Egypt». (*Prehistorische Topfen aus Indien and Aegypten*).
- © The Sun King Akhenaten of Egypt (ruled 1352-1336 BCE according to the mainstream view) was the son-in-law to Dasharatha, the Mitanni king of North Syria, through the queen, Kiya (the name Dasharatha is spelled Tushratta in the Hittite cuneiform script, which does not distinguish between 'd' and 't' very well. Some have suggested that the Sanskrit original is Tvesharatha, "having splendid chariots"). Letters exchanged between Akhenaten and Dasharatha have been found in Amarna in Egypt and other evidence comes from the tombs of the period that have been discovered in excellent condition.
- © The Mitanni, who worshiped Vedic gods, belonged to an Indic kingdom that was connected by marriage across several generations to the Egyptian 18th dynasty to which Akhenaten belonged. The first Mitanni king was Sutarna I ("good sun"). He was followed by Paratarna I ("great sun"), Parashukshatra ("ruler with axe"), Saukshatra ("son of Sukshatra, the good ruler"), Paratarna II, Artatama or Ritadhama ("abiding in cosmic law"), Sutarna II, Dasharatha, and finally Mativaja (Matiwazza, "whose wealth is prayer") during whose lifetime the Mitanni state appears to have become a vassal to Assyria.
- © In a treaty between the Hittites and the Mitanni, Indic deities Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and Nasatya (Ashvins) are invoked. A text by a Mitannian named Kikkuli uses words such as *aika* (*eka*, one), *tera* (*tri*, three), *panza* (*pancha*, five), *satta* (*sapta*, seven), *na* (*nava*, nine), *vartana* (*vartana*, round). Another text has *babru* (*babhru*, brown), *parita* (*palita*, grey), and *pinkara* (*pingala*, red). Their chief festival was the celebration of *vishuva* (solstice) very much like in India. It is not only the kings who had Sanskrit names; a large number of other Sanskrit names have been unearthed in the records from the area.

**Conclusion:** In view of the above discussed details, the following points are presented as conclusion:

- ❁ How the views of the non-Indian Indologists had been changing during the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century can be noted. While credit was given to India initially, slowly, they were not only denying, but, bringing hypotheses that India derived everything from the Greek, Roman, Persian, Babylonian sources.
- ❁ In spite of the criticism and riddles of Ramayana, the tradition of its prevalence for more than 2500 years with the mass following and impact in different art form of people of different cultures and civilizations on the earth, at places situated thousands of kilometers away from each other, gives first evidence that it cannot be a simple story to be repeated and continued with similar patterns noted with variance.
- ❁ That the description of "Ramayana like pictures" in paintings and sculptures, as pointed out are surprisingly comprehensible to Indians is not a mere coincidence.
- ❁ The historical painters and sculptures behind could not have depicted such portrayals without the knowledge of "Ramayana" or that Indians would later recognize them easily.
- ❁ From IVC to Mauryan period, the Egyptian, African, Mediterranean civilizations were having regular contacts with India. Indians were carrying out trade with them with the movement of goods, as evident from the archaeological evidences coming out.
- ❁ The consideration of Gangetic Valley in Indian context is important one. As H. D. Sankalia pointed out, horizontal excavations have not been conducted there to prove the existence of Chandragupta Maurya, Bimbisara, Asoka etc., there.
- ❁ As the human settlement has been continuing with activities such excavations is not possible and the vertical excavations conducted at places cannot give any conclusive results.
- ❁ The date of Mahabharat War as sheet anchor of Indian history clears off many riddles and criticism. Thus, the consideration of pre-Mahabharat period, in the context of Ramayana may pose chronological problem acceptable to historians. But, historians cannot ignore the facts pointed out and such "historical riddles" are also to be solved by them.